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Some account of the Doctrines of the Lutheran Church, and of the Life of MARTIN LUTHER, the Chief of the Reformers from Popery.

THE Lutherans are those Christians who follow the opinion of Martin Luther, the celebrated reformer of the church, in the sixteenth century. In order that we may trace the rise and progress of Lutheranism, we must here refer to the life of Luther himself.—Luther was a native of Eisleben, in Saxony, and born in 1483. Though his parents were poor, he received a learned education, during the progress of which he gave many indications of uncommon vigor and acuteness of genius. As his mind was naturally susceptible of serious impressions, and tintured with somewhat of that religious melancholy which delights in the solitude and devotion of a monastic life, he retired into a convent of Augustinian friars ;

where he acquired great reputation not only for piety, but for love of knowledge, and unwearied application to study. The cause of this retirement is said to have been, that he was once struck by lightning, and his companion killed by his side by the same flash. He had been taught the scholastic philosophy which was in vogue in those days, and made considerable progress in it : but happening to find a copy of the Bible which lay neglected in the library of his monastery, he applied himself to the study of it with such eagerness and assiduity, as quite astonished the monks ; and increased his reputation for sanctity so much, that he was chosen professor first of philosophy, and afterwards of theology, in Wittenberg, on the Elbe, where Frederic, elector of Saxony, had founded an university.

While Luther continued to enjoy the highest reputation for sanctity and learning, Tetzels, a Dominican friar, came to Wit-

tenberg in order to publish indulgences. Luther beheld his success with great concern ; and having first inveighed against indulgences from the pulpit, he afterwards published ninety-five theses, containing his sentiments on that subject. These he proposed not as points fully established, but as subjects of enquiry and disputation. He appointed a day on which the learned were invited to impugn them either in person or by writing ; and to the whole he subjoined solemn protestations of his high respect for the apostolic see, and of his implicit submission to its authority. No opponent appeared at the time prefixed : the theses spread over Germany with astonishing rapidity, and were read with the greatest eagerness.

Though Luther met with no opposition for some little time after he began to publish his new doctrines, it was not long before many zealous champions arose to defend those opinions with which the wealth and power of the clergy were so strictly connected. Their cause, however, was by no means promoted by these endeavors : the people began to call in question even the authority of the canon law, and of the pope himself. The court of Rome at first despised these new doctrines and disputes ; but at last the attention of the pope being raised by the great success of the reformer, and the complaints of his adversaries, Luther was summoned, in the month of July, 1518, to appear at Rome, within sixty days, before the auditor of the chamber. One of Luther's adversaries, named Prierias, who

had written against him, was appointed to examine his doctrines, and to decide concerning them. The pope wrote at the same time to the elector of Saxony, beseeching him not to protect a man whose heretical and profane tenets were so shocking to pious ears ; and enjoined the provincial of the Augustinians to check, by his authority, the rashness of an arrogant monk, which brought disgrace upon their order, and gave offence and disturbance to the whole church.

From these letters, and the appointment of his open enemy Prierias to be his judge, Luther easily saw what sentence he might expect at Rome ; and therefore discovered the utmost solicitude to have his cause tried in Germany, and before a less suspected tribunal. He wrote a submissive letter to the pope, in which he promised an unreserved obedience to his will, for as yet he entertained no doubt of the divine original of the pope's authority ; and by the intercession of the other professors, Cajetan, the pope's legate in Germany, was appointed to hear and determine the cause. Luther appeared before him without hesitation ; but Cajetan thought it below his dignity to dispute the point with a person so much his inferior in rank ; and therefore required him, by virtue of the apostolic powers with which he was clothed, to retract the errors which he had uttered with regard to indulgences and the nature of faith, and to abstain for the future from the publication of new and dangerous opinions ; and at the last forbade him to appear in his

presence, unless he proposed to comply with what had been required of him.

This haughty and violent manner of proceeding, together with some other circumstances, gave Luther's friends such strong reasons to suspect that even the imperial safe-conduct would not be able to protect him from the legate's power and resentment, that they prevailed on him secretly to withdraw from Augsburg, where he had attended the legate, and to return to his own country. But before his departure, according to a form of which there had been some examples, he prepared a solemn appeal from the legate, ill-informed at that time concerning his cause, to the pope, when he should receive more full intimation with respect to it. Cajetan, enraged at Luther's abrupt retreat, and at the publication of his appeal, wrote to the elector of Saxony, complaining of both; and requiring him, as he regarded the peace of the church, or the authority of its head, either to send that seditious monk a prisoner to Rome, or to banish him out of his territories. Frederic had hitherto, from political motives, protected Luther, as thinking he might be of use in checking the enormous power of the see of Rome; and though all Germany resounded with his fame, the elector had never yet admitted him into his presence. But upon this demand made by the cardinal, it became necessary to throw off somewhat of his former reserve. He had been at great expense and bestowed much attention on founding a new university, an object of considerable impor-

tance to every German prince; and foreseeing how fatal a blow the removal of Luther would be to its reputation, he not only declined complying with either of the pope's requests, but openly discovered great concern for Luther's safety.

The situation of our reformer, in the mean time, became daily more and more alarming. He knew very well what were the motives which induced the elector to afford him protection, and that he could by no means depend on a continuance of his friendship. If he should be obliged to quit Saxony, he had no other asylum, and must stand exposed to whatever punishment the rage or bigotry of his enemies could inflict; and so ready were his adversaries to condemn him, that he had been declared a heretic at Rome before the expiration of the sixty days allowed him in the citation for making his appearance. Notwithstanding all this, however, he discovered no symptoms of timidity or remissness; but continued to vindicate his own conduct and opinions, and to inveigh against those of his adversaries with more vehemence than ever. Being convinced, therefore, that the pope would soon proceed to the most violent measures against him, he appealed to a general council, which he affirmed to be the representative of the Catholic church, and superior in power to the pope, who, being a fallible man might err, as St. Peter, the most perfect of his predecessors, had done.

The court of Rome was equally assiduous, in the mean time, to crush the author of these

new doctrines, which gave them so much uneasiness. A bull was issued by the pope of a date prior to Luther's appeal, in which he magnified the virtues of indulgences, and subjected to the heaviest ecclesiastical censures all who presumed to teach a contrary doctrine. Such a clear decision of the sovereign pontiff against him might have been very fatal to Luther's cause, had not the death of the emperor Maximilian, which happened on January 17, 1519, contributed to give matters a different turn. Both the principles and interest of Maximilian had prompted him to support the authority of the see of Rome; but, in consequence of his death, the vicariate of that part of Germany which is governed by the Saxon laws devolved to the elector of Saxony; and, under the shelter of his friendly administration, Luther himself enjoyed tranquillity; and his opinions took such root in different places, that they could never afterwards be eradicated. At the same time, as the election of an emperor was a point more interesting to the pope (Leo X) than a theological controversy which he did not understand, and of which he could not foresee the consequences, he was so extremely solicitous not to irritate a prince of such considerable influence in the electoral college as Frederick, that he discovered a great unwillingness to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against Luther, which his adversaries continually demanded with the most clamorous importunity.

From the reason just now given, and Leo's natural aversion to

severe measures, a suspension of proceeding against Luther took place for eighteen months, though perpetual negotiations were carried on during this interval in order to bring the matter to an amicable issue. The manner in which these were conducted having given our reformer many opportunities of observing the corruption of the court of Rome, its obstinacy in adhering to established errors, and its indifference about truth, however clearly proposed or strongly proved, he began, in 1520, to utter some doubts with regard to the divine original of the papal authority, which he publicly disputed with Eccius, one of his most learned and formidable antagonists. The dispute was indecisive, both parties claiming the victory; but it must have been very mortifying to the partizans of the Romish church to hear such an essential point of their doctrine publicly attacked.

The papal authority being once suspected, Luther proceeded to push on his enquiries and attacks from one doctrine to another, till at last he began to shake the firmest foundations on which the wealth and power of the church were established. Leo then began to perceive that there were no hopes of reclaiming such an incorrigible heretic, and therefore prepared to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against him. The college of cardinals was often assembled, in order to prepare the sentence with due deliberation; and the ablest canonists were consulted how it might be expressed with unexceptionable formality. At last it was

issued on the 15th of June, 1520. Forty-one propositions, extracted out of Luther's works, were therein condemned as heretical, scandalous, and offensive to pious ears ; all persons were forbidden to read his writings, upon pain of excommunication : such as had any of them in their custody were commanded to commit them to the flames ; he himself, if he did not within sixty days publicly recant his errors, and burn his books, was pronounced an obstinate heretic, excommunicated, and delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh ; and all secular princes were required, under pain of incurring the same censure, to seize his person, that he might be punished as his crimes deserved.

Luther was not in the least disconcerted by this sentence, which he had for some time expected. He renewed his appeal to his general council ; declared the pope to be that antichrist or man of sin whose appearance is foretold in the New Testament ; declaimed against his tyranny with greater vehemence than ever ; and at last, by way of retaliation, having assembled all the professors and students in the university of Wittemberg, with great pomp, and in the presence of a vast multitude of spectators, he cast the volumes of the canon law, together with the bull of excommunication, into the flames. The manner in which this action was justified gave still more offence than the action itself. Having collected from the canon law some of the most extravagant propositions with regard to the plenitude and om-

nipotence of the pope's power, as well as the subordination of all secular jurisdiction to his authority, he published these with a commentary, pointing out the impiety of such tenets, and their evident tendency to subvert all civil government.

On the accession of Charles V. to the empire, Luther found himself in a very dangerous situation. Charles, in order to secure the pope's friendship, had determined to treat him with great severity. His eagerness to gain this point rendered him not averse to gratify the papal legates in Germany, who insisted, that, without any delay, or formal deliberation, the diet then sitting at Worms ought to condemn a man whom the pope had already excommunicated as an incorrigible heretic. Such an abrupt manner of proceeding, however, being deemed unprecedented and unjust by the members of the diet, they made a point of Luther's appearing in person, and declaring whether he adhered or not to those opinions which had drawn upon him the censures of the church. Not only the emperor, but all the princes through whose territories he had to pass, granted him a safe-conduct ; and Charles wrote to him at the same time, requiring his immediate attendance on the diet, and renewing his promises of protection from any injury or violence. Luther did not hesitate one moment about yielding obedience ; and set out for Worms, attended by the herald who had brought the emperor's letter and safe-conduct. While on his journey, many of his friends, whom the fate of Huss, under similar cir-

cumstances, and notwithstanding the same security of an imperial safe-conduct, filled with solicitude, advised and intreated him not to rush wantonly in the midst of danger. But Luther, superior to such terrors, silenced them with this reply : " I am lawfully called," said he, " to appear in that city ; and thither I will go in the name of the Lord, though as many devils as there are tiles on the houses were there combined against me."

The reception which he met with at Worms was such as might have been reckoned a full reward of all his labors, if vanity and the love of applause had been the principles by which he was influenced. Greater crowds assembled to behold him than had appeared at the emperor's public entry ; his apartments were daily filled with princes and personages of the highest rank ; and he was treated with an homage more sincere, as well as more flattering, than any which pre-eminence in birth or condition can command. At his appearance before the diet he behaved with great decency and with equal firmness. He readily acknowledged an excess of acrimony and vehemence in his controversial writings ; but refused to retract his opinions, unless he were convinced of their falsehood, or to consent to their being tried by any other rule than the word of God. When neither threats nor intreaties could prevail on him to depart from this resolution, some of the ecclesiastics proposed to imitate the example of the council of Constance, and, by punishing the author of

this pestilent heresy, who was now in their power, to deliver the church at once from such an evil. But the members of the diet refusing to expose the German integrity to fresh reproach by a second violation of public faith, and Charles being no less unwilling to bring a stain upon the beginning of his administration by such an ignominious action, Luther was permitted to depart in safety. A few days after he left the city, a severe edict was published in the emperor's name, and by authority of the diet, depriving him, as an obstinate and excommunicated criminal, of all the privileges which he enjoyed as a subject of the empire ; forbidding any prince to harbor or protect him ; and requiring all to seize his person as soon as the term specified in his protection should be expired.

But this rigorous decree had no considerable effect ; the execution of it being prevented partly by the multiplicity of occupations which the commotions in Spain, together with the wars in Italy and the Low Countries, created to the emperor ; and partly by a prudent precaution employed by the elector of Saxony, Luther's faithful patron. As Luther, on his return from Worms, was passing near Altenstrain, in Thuringia, a number of horsemen, in masks, rushed suddenly out of a wood, where the elector had appointed them to lie in wait for him, and, surrounding his company, carried him, after dismissing all his attendants, to Wortburg, a strong castle, not far distant. There the elector ordered him to be supplied with every thing

necessary or agreeable ; but the place of his retreat was carefully concealed, until the fury of the present storm against him began to abate, upon a change in the political system of Europe. In this solitude, where he remained nine months, and which he frequently called his *Patmos*, after the name of that island to which the apostle John was banished, he exerted his usual vigor and industry in defence of his doctrines, or in confutation of his adversaries ; publishing several treatises, which revived the spirit of his followers, astonished to a great degree, and disheartened at the sudden disappearance of their leader.

Luther, weary at length of his retirement, appeared publicly again at Wittemberg, upon the 6th of March, 1522. He appeared, indeed, without the elector's leave ; but immediately wrote him a letter to prevent his taking it ill. The edict of Charles V. severe as it was, had given little or no check to Luther's doctrine ; for the emperor was no sooner gone into Flanders, than his edict was neglected and despised, and the doctrine seemed to spread even faster than before. Carolostadius, in Luther's absence, had pushed things on faster than his leader, and had attempted to abolish the use of mass, to remove images out of the churches, to set aside auricular confession, invocation of saints, the abstaining from meats ; had allowed the monks to leave the monasteries, to neglect their vows, and to marry ; in short, had quite changed the doctrine and discipline of the church at Wittemberg ; all which, though

not against Luther's sentiments was yet blamed by him, as being rashly and unseasonably done. Lutheranism was still confined to Germany ; it was not got to France : and Henry VIII of England made the most rigorous acts to hinder it from invading his realm. Nay, he did something more ; to shew his zeal for religion and the holy see, and perhaps his skill in theological learning, he wrote a treatise *Of the Seven Sacraments*, against Luther's book *Of the Captivity of Babylon*, which he presented to Leo X. in October, 1521. The pope received it very favorably, and was so well pleased with the king of England, that he complimented him with the title of *Defender of the Faith*. Luther, however, paid no regard to his kingship, but answered him with great sharpness, treating both his person and performance in the most contemptuous manner. Henry complained of Luther's rude usage of him to the princes of Saxony : and Fisher, bishop of Rochester, replied to his answer, in behalf of Henry's treatise ; but neither the king's complaint, nor the bishop's reply, were attended with any visible effects.

Luther, though he had put a stop to the violent proceedings of Carolostadius, now made open war with the pope and bishops ; and, that he might make the people despise their authority as much as possible, he wrote one book against the pope's bull, and another against the order falsely called the *Order of Bishops*. The same year, 1522, he wrote a letter, dated July the 29th, to the assembly

of the states of Bohemia ; in which he assured them that he was laboring to establish their doctrine in Germany, and exhorted them not to return to the communion of the church of Rome : and he published also this year a translation of the New Testament in the German tongue, which was afterwards corrected by himself and Melancthon. This translation having been printed several times, and being in every body's hands, Ferdinand, archduke of Austria, the emperor's brother, made a very severe edict, to hinder the farther publication of it, and forbad all other subjects of his imperial majesty to have any copies of it, or of Luther's other books. Some other princes followed his example ; and Luther was so angry at it, that he wrote a treatise *Of the Secular Power*, in which he accuses them of tyranny and impiety. The diet of the empire was held at Nuremberg, at the end of the year, to which Hadrian VI sent his brief, dated November the 25th ; for Leo X died upon the 2d of December, 1521, and Hadrian had been elected pope upon the 9th of January following. In his brief, among other things, he observes to the diet how he had heard, with grief, that Martin Luther, after the sentence of Leo X, which was ordered to be executed by the edict of Worms, continued to teach the same errors, and daily to publish books full of heresies ; that it appeared strange to him that so large and so religious a nation could be seduced by a wretched apostate friar ; that nothing, however, could be more pernicious

to Christendom ; and that, therefore, he exhorts them to use their utmost endeavors to make Luther, and the authors of these tumults, return to their duty ; or, if they refuse, and continue obstinate, to proceed against them according to the laws of the empire, and the severity of the last edict.

The resolution of this diet was published in the form of an edict, upon the 6th of March, 1523 ; but it had no effect in checking the Lutherans, who still went on in the same triumphant manner. This year Luther wrote a great many pieces ; among the rest, one upon the dignity and office of the supreme magistrate ; which Frederic, elector of Saxony, is said to have been highly pleased with. He sent, about the same time, a writing in the German language to the Waldenses, or Pickards, in Bohemia and Moravia, who had applied to him "about worshipping the body of Christ in the eucharist." He wrote, also, another book, which he dedicated to the senate and people of Prague, "about the institution of ministers of the church." He drew up a form of saying mass. He wrote a piece, entitled, *An example of popish doctrine and divinity* ; which Dupin calls a *satire against nuns, and those who profess a monastic life*. He wrote also against the vows of virginity, in his preface to his commentary on Cor. i. 8, and his exhortations here were, it seems, followed with effect ; for, soon after, nine nuns, among whom was Catherine de Bore, eloped from the nunnery at Nimptschen, and were bro't,

by the assistance of Leonard Coppen, a burghess of Torgau, to Wittemberg. Whatever offence this proceeding might give to the Papists, it was highly extolled by Luther; who, in a book written in the German language, compares the deliverance of these nuns from the slavery of a monastic life to that of the souls which Jesus Christ has delivered by his death. This year Luther had occasion to canonize two of his followers, who as Melchoir Adam relates, were burnt at Brussels, in the beginning of July, and were the first who suffered Martyrdom for his doctrine. He wrote also a consolatory epistle to three noble ladies at Misnia, who were banished from the duke of Saxony's court at Friburg, for reading his books.

In the beginning of the year 1524, Clement VII sent a legate into Germany to the diet which was to be held at Nuremberg. Hadrian VI died in October, 1523, and was succeeded by Clement upon the 19th of November. A little before his death, he canonized Benno, who was bishop of Meissen, in the time of Gregory VII, and one of the most zealous defenders of the holy see. Luther, imagining that this was done directly to oppose him, drew up a piece with this title, *Against the new idol and old devil set up at Meissen*, in which he treats the memory of Gregory with great freedom, and does not spare even Hadrian. Clement VII's legate represented to the diet of Nuremberg the necessity of enforcing the execution of the edict of Worms, which had been strangely neglected by the

princes of the empire; but, notwithstanding the legate's solicitations, which were very pressing, the decrees of that diet were thought so ineffectual, that they were condemned at Rome, and rejected by the emperor.

In October, 1524, Luther flung off the monastic habit; which, though not premeditated and designed, was yet a very proper preparative to a step he took the year after: we mean his marriage with Catherine de Bore.

His marriage, however, did not retard his activity and diligence in the work of reformation. He revised the Augsburg confession of faith, and apology for the Protestants, when the Protestant religion was first established on a firm basis.

After this, Luther had little else to do than to sit down and contemplate the mighty work he had finished; for that a single monk should be able to give the church so rude a shock, that there needed but such another entirely to overthrow it, may very well seem a mighty work. He did, indeed, little else; for the remainder of his life was spent in exhorting princes, states, and universities, to confirm the reformation which had been brought about through him; and publishing from time to time such writings as might encourage, direct, and aid them in doing it. The emperor threatened temporal punishment with armies, and the pope eternal with bulls and anathemas; but Luther cared for none of their threats.

In the year 1533, Luther wrote a consolatory epistle to

the citizens of Oschatz, who had suffered some hardships for adhering to the Augsburg confession of faith ; in which, among other things, he says, " The devil is the host, and the world is his inn ; so that wherever you come, you shall be sure to find this ugly host." He had also about this time a terrible controversy with George duke of Saxony, who had such an aversion to Luther's doctrine, that he obliged his subjects to take an oath that they would never embrace it. However, sixty or seventy citizens of Leipzig were found to have deviated a little from the Catholic way in some point or other, and they were known previously to have consulted Luther about it ; upon which George complained to the elector John that Luther had not only abused his person, but also preached up rebellion among his subjects. The elector ordered Luther to be acquainted with this ; and to be told, at the same time, that if he did not acquit himself of the charge, he could not possibly escape punishment. But Luther easily refuted the accusation, by proving, that he had been so far from stirring up his subjects against him on the score of religion, that, on the contrary, he had exhorted them rather to undergo the greatest hardships, and even suffer themselves to be banished.

In the year 1534, the Bible translated by him into German was first printed, as the old privilege, dated at Bibliopolis, under the elector's hand, shews ; and it was published the year after. He

also published this year a book against masses, and the consecration of priests, in which he relates a conference he had with the devil upon those points ; for it is remarkable in Luther's whole history that he never had any conflicts of any kind within, but the devil was always his antagonist. In February 1537, an assembly was held at Smalkald about matters of religion, to which Luther and Melancthon were called. At this meeting Luther was seized with so grievous an illness, that there were no hopes of his recovery. He was afflicted with the stone, and had a stoppage of urine for eleven days. In this terrible condition he would needs undertake to travel, notwithstanding all that his friends could say or do to prevent him : his resolution, however, was attended with a good effect ; for the night after his departure he began to be better. As he was carried along he made his will, in which he bequeathed his detestation of popery to his friends and brethren ; agreeably to what he often used to say ; *Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua, papa* ; that is, " I was the plague of popery in my life, and shall continue to be so in my death."

This year the pope and the court of Rome, finding it impossible to deal with the Protestants by force, began to have recourse to stratagem. They affected, therefore, to think, that though Luther had, indeed, carried things on with a high hand and to a violent extreme, yet what he had pleaded in defence of these measures was not en-

tirely without foundation. They talked with a seeming shew of moderation ; and Pius III, who succeeded Clement VII, proposed a reformation first among themselves, and even went so far as to fix a place for a council to meet at for that purpose. But Luther treated this farce as it deserved to be treated ; unmasked and detected it immediately ; and, to ridicule it the more strongly, caused a picture to be drawn, in which was represented the pope seated on high upon a throne, some cardinals about him with foxes' tails on, and seeming to evacuate upwards and downwards (*sursum deorsum refurgare*, as Melchior Adam expresses it.) This was fixed over against the title-page, to let the reader see at once the scope and design of the book ; which was to expose that cunning and artifice with which those subtle politicians affected to cleanse and purify themselves from their errors and superstitions. Luther published, about the same time, a confutation of the pretended grant of Constantine to Sylvester bishop of Rome ; and also some letters of John Huss, written from his prison at Constance to the Bohemians. In this manner was Luther employed till his death, which happened in the year 1546.

A thousand lies were invented by the Papists about Luther's death. Some said that he died suddenly ; others, that he killed himself ; others, that the devil strangled him ; others, that his corpse stunk so abominably, that they were forced to leave it in the way, as it was carried to be interred. Nay,

lies were invented about his death, even while he was yet alive. Luther, however, to give the most effectual refutation of this account of his death, put forth an advertisement of his being alive ; and, to be even with the Papists for the malice they had shewn in this lie, wrote a book at the same time to prove, that " papacy was founded by the devil."

Lutheranism has undergone some alterations since the time of its founder. Luther rejected the epistle of St. James as inconsistent with the doctrine of St. Paul in relation to justification ; he also set aside the Apocalypse : both which are now received as canonical in the Lutheran Church.

Luther reduced the number of sacraments to two, viz. baptism and the eucharist ; but he believed the impanation or consubstantiation ; that is, that the matter of the bread and wine remain with the body and blood of Christ ; and it is in this article that the main difference between the Lutheran and English churches consists.

Luther maintained the mass to be no sacrifice ; exploded the adoration of the host, auricular confession, meritorious works, indulgences, purgatory, the worship of images, &c., which had been introduced in the corrupt times of the Romish church. He also opposed the doctrine of free will, maintained predestination, and asserted our justification to be solely by the imputation of the merits and satisfaction of Christ. He also opposed the fastings in the Romish church, monastical vows, the celibate of the clergy, &c.

The Lutherans, however, of all Protestants, are said to differ least from the Romish church; as they affirm that the body and blood of Christ are materially present in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, though in an incomprehensible manner; and likewise represent some religious rites and institutions, as the use of images in churches, the distinguishing vestments of the clergy, the private confession of sins, the use of wafers in the administration of the Lord's supper, the form of exorcism in the celebration of baptism, and other ceremonies of the like nature, as tolerable, and some of them as useful. The Lutherans maintain, with regard to the divine decrees, that they respect the salvation or misery of men, in consequence of a previous knowledge of their sentiments and characters, and not as free and unconditional, and as founded on the mere will of God. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, the Lutherans began to entertain a greater liberality of sentiment than they had before adopted; though in many places they persevered longer in severe and despotic principles than other Protestant churches. Their public teachers now enjoy an unbounded liberty of dissenting from the decisions of those symbols or creeds which were once deemed almost infallible rules of faith and practice, and of declaring their dissent in the manner they judge the most expedient. Mosheim attributes this change in their sentiments to the maxim which they generally adopted, that Christians were

accountable to God alone for their religious opinions; and that no individual could be justly punished by the magistrate for his erroneous opinions while he conducted himself like a virtuous and obedient subject, and made no attempts to disturb the peace and order of civil society. In Sweden the Lutheran church is episcopal: in Norway the same. In Denmark, under the name of *superintendent*, all episcopal authority is retained; whilst through Germany the superior power is vested in a *consistory*, over which there is a president, with a distinction of rank and privileges, and a subordination of inferior clergy to their superiors, different from the parity of Presbyterianism.

[*Buck's Theol. Dict.*



A short account of the Life and Death of John Huss, one of the first Reformers.

JOHAN HUSS, a celebrated divine and martyr, was born at a town in Bohemia, called Hussenitz, somewhere about 1376, and liberally educated in the university of Prague. Here he took the degree of B. A. in 1393, and a master's in 1395; and we find him in 1400, in orders and minister of a church in that city. He began to preach and write with great zeal against the superstitions and errors of the church of Rome. He succeeded so far, that the sale of indulgences began greatly to decrease and wax cold among the Bohemians; and the pope's party cried aloud, that there would

soon be an end of religion, if measures were not taken to oppose the restless endeavors of the Hussites. With a view therefore of stopping this evil, Subinco, the archbishop of Prague, issued forth two mandates in 1408 ; one, addressed to the members of the university, by which they were ordered to bring together all Wickliff's writings, with which Huss had been greatly taken ; that such, as were found to contain any thing erroneous or heretical, might be burnt ; the other to all curates and ministers, commanding them to teach the people, that, after the consecration of the elements in the Holy Sacrament, there remained nothing but the real body and blood of Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine. Huss, whose credit and authority in the university was very great, as well for his piety and learning, as on account of considerable services he had done it, found no difficulty in persuading many of its members of the unreasonableness and absurdity of these mandates. Upon this foundation they appealed to Gregory XII. and the archbishop Subinco was summoned to Rome. But on acquainting the pope that the heretical notions of Wickliff were gaining ground apace in Bohemia, through the zeal of some preachers who had read his books, a bull was granted him for the suppression of all such notions in his province. By virtue of this bull, Subinco condemned the writings of Wickliff, and proceeded against four doctors who had not complied with his mandate, in bringing in their copies. Huss and others, who

were involved in this sentence protested against this procedure of the archbishop, and appealed from him a second time, in June 1410. The matter was then brought before John XXIII. who ordered Huss, accused of many errors and heresies, to appear in person at the court of Rome, and gave a special commission to cardinal Colonna to cite him. Huss, however, under the protection and countenance of Wenceslaus king of Bohemia, did not appear, but sent three deputies to excuse his absence, and to answer all which should be alleged against him. Colonna paid no regard to the deputies, nor to any defence they could make ; but declared Huss guilty of contumacy to the court of Rome, and excommunicated him for it. Upon this the deputies appealed from the Cardinal to the pope, who commissioned four other cardinals to examine into the affair. These commissaries confirmed all which Colonna had done. Nay, they did more ; the excommunication, which was limited to Huss, they extended to his friends and followers : they declared him an Heresiarch, and pronounced an interdict against him.

All this while, utterly regardless of what was doing at Rome, Huss continued to preach and write with great zeal against the errors and superstitions of that church, and in defence of Wickliff and his doctrines. He preached directly against the pope, the cardinals, and the clergy of that party ; and at the same time published writings, to shew the lawfulness of exposing the vices of ecclesiastics. In 1413, the religious tumults and seditions

were become so violent, that Subinco applied to Wenceslaus to appease them. Wenceslaus banished Huss from Prague ; but still the disorders continued.— Then the archbishop had recourse to Sigismond the emperor, who promised him to come into Bohemia, and assist in settling the affairs of the church : but before Sigismond could be prepared for the journey, Subinco died in Hungary. About this time bulls were published by John XXIII. at Prague, against Ladislaus king of Naples ; in which a crusade was proclaimed against that prince, and indulgences promised to all who would go to the war. This furnished Huss, who had returned to Prague upon the death of Subinco, with a fine occasion of preaching against indulgences and crusades, and of refuting these bulls : and the people were so affected and inflamed with his preaching, that they declared pope John to be the Antichrist. Upon this, some of the ringleaders among the Hussites were seized and imprisoned ; which, however, was not consented to by the people, who were prepared to resist, till the magistrate had promised that no harm should happen to the prisoners. But he did not keep his word : they were executed in prison ; which the Hussites discovering, took up arms, rescued their corpses, and interred them honorably, and as martyrs, in the church of Bethlehem, which was Huss's church.

Thus things went on at Prague and in Bohemia, till the council of Constance was called : where it was agreed between the pope and the emperor, that Huss should appear, and give an ac-

count of himself and his doctrine. The emperor promised for his security against any danger, and that nothing should be attempted against his person : upon which he set out, after declaring publicly, that he was going to the council at Constance, to answer the accusations which were formed against him ; and challenging all people who had any thing to except to his life and conversation, to do it without delay. He made the same declarations in all the towns through which he passed, and arrived at Constance, November 3, 1414. Here he was accused in form, and a list of his heretical tenets laid before the pope and the prelates of the council. He was summoned to appear the 26th day after his arrival ; and declared himself ready to be examined, and to be corrected by them, if he should be found to have taught any doctrine worthy of censure. The cardinals soon after withdrew, to deliberate upon the most proper method of proceeding against Huss ; and the result of their deliberations was, that he should be imprisoned. This accordingly was done, notwithstanding the emperor's parole for his security ; nor were all this prince's endeavors afterwards sufficient to release him, though he exerted himself to the utmost. Huss was tossed about from prison to prison for six whole months, suffering great hardships and pains from those who had the care of him ; and at last was condemned of heresy by the council, in his absence and without a hearing, for maintaining, that the Eucharist ought to be administered to the people in both kinds. The empe-

ror, in the mean time, complained heavily of the contempt that was shewn to himself, and of the usage that was shewn to Huss; insisting, that Huss ought to be allowed a fair and public hearing. Therefore, on the 5th and 7th of June, 1415, he was brought before the council, and permitted to say what he could in behalf of himself and his doctrines; but every thing was carried on with noise and tumult, and Huss soon given to understand, that they were not disposed to hear any thing from him, but a recantation of his errors: which however he absolutely refused, and was ordered back to prison. July 6th, he was brought again before the council; where he was condemned of heresy, and ordered to be burnt. The ceremony of his execution was this: he was first stripped of his sacerdotal vestments by bishops nominated for that purpose; next he was formally deprived of his university-degrees; then he had a paper-crown put upon his head, painted round with devils, and the word *Heresiarch* inscribed in great letters; then he was delivered over to the magistrate, who burnt him alive, after having first burnt his books at the door of the church. He died with great firmness and resolution; and his ashes were afterwards gathered up and thrown into the Rhine. His writings, very numerous and very learned, were collected into a body, when printing began.

The preparation God hath made for the happiness of his holy and obedient kingdom.

HAPPINESS is desired by all. For this the philosopher explores the heavens, and the husbandman toils. Although many are wretched, it is not through want of ample provision, in the structure of nature for their felicity. The Father of all things is good and hath provided enough in his house for all his creatures. If they are virtuous, they may enjoy his glory and fulness. The same benevolence, which created and made the creatures with capacities for happiness, denied them no good which is adapted to their natures. The forbidden delights of sin are not denied through any want of goodness in God, or because they are a richer happiness than he is willing his creatures should enjoy, but because in their consequences, they are a natural evil. What is mistaken for happiness is not real; if it produce a temporary gratification, it will injure the mind, or in some way be productive, in the end, of more evil than good. There is no limitation fixed by the Creator upon the happiness of his creatures, but that which arises from their capacity of receiving. By the practice of godliness, and observing the laws of religion, every one may be perfectly blessed, and happy as his nature admits. All the powers of enjoyment shall be filled with such a good as is adapted to their natural and intellectual natures. Even in this life, the evil and sorrows that attend us, are all the nat-

ural fruits of sin ; or such corrective evils as are proper in a state of trial, to prepare us for a more perfect life. If we are unhappy, or have little felicity, the fault must be sought in ourselves, and neither in a want of divine benevolence, nor of means and objects for our full contentment. Though our existence is derived and the effect of sovereign wisdom, though we cannot be profitable unto God, though we cannot merit any thing at his hand, though we are unable to provide for ourselves ; there is a boundless prospect of blessedness opened by divine revelation in the gospel, for the enjoyment of every good and pure mind : and while we depend on a divine promise for the completion of his benevolence, we may see in this life a foundation laid, and the means prepared by which every holy creature may become supremely blessed.

As we are made by the Creator, our natures are adapted to a perfect happiness ; we have every power, faculty and passion necessary for apprehending and receiving a rational felicity. The same kind of happiness, in a low degree, as constitutes the infinite blessedness of the Father himself. As he was pleased to make man in his own image, with understanding, reason and affections finitely resembling his own glorious nature, it is not arrogance in us to determine that the happiness he designed for us is of the same kind, and generally of the same nature, as that by which he is rendered infinitely blessed. When immoral persons are seeking any kind of pleasure

different from what religion permits, they are rejecting that which is the blessedness of the Almighty himself.

By the powers of understanding we are able to see and know that which is the portion of the mind ; by reason, we perceive the fitness of things and of the truth ; by the power of willing, we approve or disapprove ; by the pure affections, we love and enjoy ; and by these bring home the good prepared for us, and make it our own.

As the mind is constituted we are made happy by self-approbation and approving that which is right. We feel our whole rational nature satisfied and made blessed by justice, truth and benevolence.

The mind is furnished with social inclinations and affections, so that we can share in a common good, and make the felicity of others contribute to our own happiness. By these natural capacities, we resemble the infinite Being himself, and our happiness may approach as near to his, as the degree of our intelligence doth to his infinite nature.

It is worthy of our grateful notice, that in the nature of things, there is a preparation made for the increasing felicity of virtuous creatures. It hath been said, that there is no limitation fixed by the Creator upon the happiness of his creatures, but which arises from their capacity of receiving. There is provision for the increase of happiness, by the growth of this capacity. We find by experience the actual powers of knowing, receiving, and enjoying constantly increase by

exercise. Through life they are in a state of progressive improvement, and we cannot conceive of any limits, at which even a finite understanding is fixed, so that it can receive and know no more.

The same power of understanding which enlarges in this world, will probably enlarge through eternity, and the whole increase of knowledge will be received as matter of happiness by a pure heart. As knowledge enlarges, as reason acquires a maturity of exercise, the virtuous passions of the soul will experience a higher enjoyment, and thus the blessedness of the creature be perpetually growing, and no one can assign limits where this progress shall end.

We may also consider the objects offered for enjoyment: the objects which our understanding, reason and affections receive, and make their own for all the purposes of a rational blessedness. The glorious Deity himself, and all his works are the portion of the mind. The creature is not placed at a distance from his Maker, his God, friend and portion. He is surrounded with his being, his perfections, his presence. He is in his hand, guided by his providence, and supported by his bounty. Divine glory as it shines forth immediately from the supreme essence, his glory and wisdom in the works of nature, his wisdom and rectitude in the moral system, are all offered to his enjoyment. These great and incomprehensible objects are the portion of every holy and gracious mind.

If our affections were well

regulated, with this provision for our good we could not fail to be happy beings. If we begin with the objects nearest to us, and which come most easily under the examination of our senses; the wisdom, the order, the connection, the uses, and the beauty of all things; every thing adapted to the use and benefit of man, every thing fit in its place and in its time, very wonderful are these things; while they praise their Author, they open a prospect by which the understanding may be enriched, and the heart delighted.

If we pass from these to consider the natural offspring of God, our brethren and fellow creatures, their numbers, their powers, their social capacities, the laws of society; the scheme of moral virtue with its various duties and affections; the universe of reasonable beings administering to a common happiness; when we feel ourselves one of the brotherhood, it must fill us with felicity. There is room for the understanding, reason and all the affections of the heart to be delighted. Viewing all these things, their greatness and glory must lead up the mind to the infinite Creator, the unchangeable Jehovah, whose counsel planned, and whose power produced their being. Here wonder is changed into adoration, and solemnity into reverence. A pure enjoyment of the creatures, always leads up the chief affections of the heart to the great Supreme himself; here every desire may be satisfied, and the creature filled with good; this is the portion of those who fear

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the Lord and walk in his statutes, they are filled with his fulness, and he is himself their chief good.

Our ideas of the preparation there is for the blessedness of godly creatures, may be still infinitely elevated, by considering the mode of redemption through the blood of the Son of God. The Father giving the Son; the Son accepting and executing his appointment to mediate, and the Spirit sealing the benefits of purchase; with all the instituted means, to call, to sanctify, to preserve and glorify his people.

Thus, as the household of God and its laws are constituted, all may be blessed if they are obedient, the happiness and the enjoyments of one do not interfere with the blessedness of others. As the object of enjoyment is infinite, the time will never come in which the growing capacity of creatures can have measured the whole. The blessedness of heaven will be increasing, God will be unfolding his glory to the understanding and the reason of creatures, and enough shall still remain to satisfy the enquiries of eternity.



MR. EDITOR,

IF you think the following will not exclude what is more profitable from your useful Magazine, you are at liberty to insert it. Z

BY conscience is meant the power of comparing and judging our own temper and actions according to a moral rule, and either approving or disapproving them. Those who use

this power, and are approved by it, are in the exercise of a good conscience; those who neglect its use, act without conscience, which takes place in a great measure with some, and perhaps at some times with almost every person. It is very unfortunate that men do not more faithfully use the power of conscience, or of judging themselves as they pass along in the scenes, business and events of life. Those, who faithfully judge themselves, are rarely condemned by others; and if we all did it, it would save us from very many sins against God, and against our brethren, which we now commit in a thoughtless manner, and which in future time, when we cannot help reviewing, will cause us sorrow.

It is a serious thought that there is a time of review. We may proceed incautiously in the most weighty concerns, and without judging ourselves as we go on, but all these things must be reviewed; they will be reviewed by the Judge, and by the laws of reason and equity; they will be reviewed by our own consciences, and happy is that person who so lives that his conscience will approve and give him inward peace.

The security of sin is very different from having a good conscience.

A person in a state of great security, and without a sense of religious obligation to his Maker and to mankind, is not troubled with an accusing conscience; but there is no propriety in saying such an one is in the exercise of a good conscience. He has no exercise of conscience. He doth not

make use of the power of judging his temper and actions by a rule of moral right ; but, under the influence of appetite and passion, does such things as are at present agreeable, without considering any obligation to God and men. It is probable that many are deceived in their own character, by mistaking security for the exercise of a good conscience. They do not feel any self-accusation, and suddenly determine they have no sin ; that their affections and practice are nearly such as they ought to be ; at least so near right, that they may feel secure of a safe state. It is difficult to know in what other way, many, who in the opinion of all others besides themselves are vicious, appear to think they have a good conscience, that they cannot be accused, and may safely risk the consequences of their present lives. In such cases, their vice and daily imperfections are hid from themselves, by not calling their own character into review, and comparing its several parts with such rules of duty, as reason and God's word have given. As this is probably a common error of mankind, and one into which we have reason to suppose great numbers fall, every reader ought very seriously to inquire whether it is not the source of his own security or good opinion of himself.

Peace of mind is the fruit of a good conscience. Security, which many do not distinguish from peace, is the fruit of having no exercise of conscience, or of not judging themselves. Have we a good conscience, or have we no exercise of con-

science ? are questions which many cannot answer so readily as they suppose. The difficulty doth not arise from the nature of the subject, but from the unfaithfulness of men to themselves. They have not done this duty to themselves in time past, and there must be a course of future observation to determine the point. These remarks may appear strange to some who read, but let them look on the world, and it is easy to find evidence they are facts. Some persons we see who are solicitous to have all their thoughts and actions agreeable to the divine law ; and others who have no concern, and take no pains in the matter, while each of them suppose they have a good conscience, and those who have been most inattentive, are most ready to determine in favor of themselves.

To determine that we have a good conscience, the following questions ought to be seriously considered :—Have we had an habitual sense of great religious obligations to God Almighty and to mankind ? Has our sense of these obligations lain with weight on our minds ? Have we accustomed ourselves, in all our transactions, to feel that we are accountable creatures ? Have we frequently examined and compared our thoughts and actions with the divine law, with reason, and with our reasonable expectation from others ? Have we a habit of frequently enquiring with ourselves, is my disposition and practice right ? Have we by experience and self-attention, learned that there is a difference between the dictates of reason,

and those of appetite and passion? Have we inured ourselves to much self-restraint? Do we often endeavor to realize the time when God will judge us, and we must judge ourselves in truth? If we cannot answer these questions in the affirmative, there is little reason to suppose we have a good conscience; and our self-approbation is not the result of having lived a good life, but of having taken no care of ourselves, and great ignorance of our own real character.

To be assured we have a good conscience, there is need of much enquiry, and those who determine the point suddenly are in very great danger of mistake. If these reflections be true, it appears probable that many who think they have a good conscience are the persons who are not at all conscientious. In determining this point concerning ourselves, too much care cannot be used. The difference between a conscience approving on just principles, and a neglectful one, is very great, and will give a determination to our hopes totally different.

To preserve a good conscience, it is necessary that we give strict attention to some known rule of duty, and thoroughly understand its requirements. To live by chance, as accidental events lead us, or as our passions and appetites occasionally suggest, cannot be a conscientious life. To judge faithfully, there must be a rule with which we compare our thoughts and actions, and a thorough acquaintance with the duties required. One of the first cares

of a person who wishes to live conscientiously, should be to inform himself in the divine law, and the spirit and practice of the gospel; what those duties are which God expects from his creatures, and with what temper they are to be performed. A disregard of the sacred oracles which are the most sure directory of men, generally leads to a great corruption of the conscience, and many times to a total carelessness. Though our own reason is not by any means to be rejected, if we rely solely on this, there is great danger of some delusion, for it is principally by the word of God that the corruptions of reason, and the undue influence of our passions over it are distinguished. It is not possible for any one to keep a good conscience, unless his mind is impressed with such a sense of the importance of doing it, as will make him careful to use every source of information, to study the word of God, and regard the dispensations of his providence, by which much light is reflected on the path of human duty. When a person is careless in knowing what his duty is, there is all probability that he will be equally careless in self-application, or in making use of such knowledge as he possesses. Those who are conscious of neglecting the means of information which a gracious God hath furnished them, have no right to think themselves conscientious.

To preserve a good conscience, it is necessary that we should have a lively sense of the divine presence. Our religious character is intimately connected with our opinions of

the Deity, and the sense we have of his perfections. False opinions of God always have a tendency to corrupt the heart, and produce unjustifiable manners ; while true conceptions of his being, attributes and will are powerful motives to duty. It is necessary that we think both right, and with deep feeling. Those who do not realize the supreme perfections never will serve God with fidelity. A sense of his omnipresent holiness is the greatest restraint on our minds, and our best assistance in conscientiously doing our duty. If we could realize that Jehovah is omnipresent, filling all places, that we live, move, and have our being in him, that he knows all our thoughts and sees all our actions ; that he keeps a book of remembrance and will judge and reward us according to the deeds here done in the body : If we could feel these truths, concerning God, it would afford a present assistance in duty, and make us careful in all our thoughts, words and actions.

It should be also noticed, that the duties of religion due to God and to our fellow men cannot be separated, and if this be attempted, we can be conscientious and honest in neither of them. These two great branches of religion grow from the same root, and flourish or decay together ; and a punctual observation of both is a necessary evidence of sincerity. It is a very badly informed conscience, which dictates devotion to God, and can dispense with justice and benevolence to men : Or which, on the other hand, regards the common du-

ties of society, but neglects the reverence and worship of the Almighty. It is not uncommon to see an attempt to separate these branches of religion : persons zealous in one of them, and wholly destitute of the other. In such cases, we must judge that those visible duties which are performed, do not originate from the most pure motives. There is a corruption at bottom, which by some selfish considerations is restrained in part, but were these to be removed, the partial Christian would openly show his corruption by a more general depravity of manners. If we wish for a good conscience, let us endeavor for a compliance with our whole duty ; love and adore God, and be just and benevolent to men. If it were possible to be conscientious in some things, and in others the contrary, it would not give ease of mind. The guilt of our deficiency would continually haunt us ; would make life wretched, the hour of death dreary and awful, and cut off our good hopes for futurity.

*Anecdote : Recommending
Submission to the Provi-
dence of God.*

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The sinful wish of a Parent ; a fact, the truth of which is authenticated by the Rev. William May.

A FOND father was in great distress for a favorite child, whom he apprehended to be dying in its infancy. Several of his friends endeavored to assuage his grief ; but he refused to be

comforted. At length the minister on whom he attended, offered to pray with him ; and desired him to compose his mind, and give up his favorite son to the Divine disposal, since there was no probable hope of his recovery. He replied, " I cannot give him up ; and it is my importunate request that God would spare this child to me, whatever may be the consequence." He had his desire, the child recovered, and grew up if possible, more and more his darling : but he lived to be a thorn in his side, and to pierce his heart with many sorrows ; and, just as he came to maturity, he robbed his excellent master, whom before he had often injured. He was seized by the hand of justice, tried, condemned, and died one of the most hardened wretches that ever went out of life in that ignominious manner. Upon the fatal day of execution, the mournful father was made to remember his former rash petition with grief and tears ; and humbled in the dust, confessed his folly and his sin. *May's Sermons*, p. 124. Note.

This interesting fact affords a striking illustration of the truth of the sentiment expressed by Solomon, Eccl. vi. 12. " For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life, which he spendeth as a shadow ? " We are but ill judges of our own happiness. We often desire, with great earnestness, objects, which, if obtained, would prove highly pernicious ; and we no less earnestly deprecate as evils, things that are not only salutary, but absolutely necessary to our real welfare. It is the happiness of

the Christian to know, that the Lord chooseth his inheritance, and ordereth all the circumstances of his lot, from the most important to the most minute. If we were acquainted with the reasons of his providential arrangements, we would not merely submit to them, but approve of them with the most perfect cordiality. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? His wisdom cannot err. His love ever leads him to promote the happiness of his people. These considerations should add a double relish to all the comforts of life which an indulgent Providence vouchsafes to the Christian. They come from the hand of your heavenly Father, and are accompanied with his blessing, which addeth no sorrow. Receive them with gratitude ; enjoy them with moderation ; and he who bestowed them, will prevent them from proving hurtful. The same consideration should also serve to promote contentment with our lot whatever it is, and an unreserved, cordial submission to the afflicting dispensations of Providence. Does God judge it proper to withhold the object of your earnest wishes, and to disappoint your best concerted schemes ? Be assured, that you know not the nature of the things you wish for, and foresee not the consequences to which the possession of them would lead. The fact which has suggested these reflections undoubtedly presents a strong case ; but similar instances of the vanity of human wishes, and of the evil consequences of their gratification, though in an inferior degree, occur from day to day. The

instruction which the example before us holds out to Christian parents, when their children are taken away in early life, is obvious and important. But it may with propriety be extended to many other cases. Does it please God to remove by death a dear partner or parent, relative or child? to visit you with severe and long continued sickness, with the loss of worldly substance, or any other affliction, such as is common to man? No chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous. But remember, Christian, that these are the appointments of your heavenly Father. They are the result of his wisdom and love. They are intended for your good: and if you improve them as you ought, they shall work together for your good. It is true, you see not at present the fitness of these dispensations, nor are permitted, in many instances, to trace their connection with your happiness. But it is the office of faith to believe the gracious assurances of this comfortable truth which your heavenly Father has given. It is your duty to rest with unsuspecting confidence in his wisdom, faith, and fulness of love. If the reasons of the divine procedure in particular cases were made known, you would, even under the severest trials, not merely submit, but rejoice. You would not merely hold your peace and refrain from murmuring, but you would open your lips, and, like Job, bless the name of the Lord, not only when he gives, but when he takes away. But clouds and darkness shall not always cover the throne of God. The time is at hand when he will explain the reasons of his procedure to his people. They shall see the end of the Lord, and understand his loving kindness manifested in all his ways. These discoveries will fill them with inexpressible admiration and joy. And the whole redeemed company shall with rapturous exultation say, "He hath done all things well."

Religious Intelligence.

DOMESTIC.

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Minutes of the General Association of Massachusetts Proper.

AGREEABLY to appointment the General Association of Massachusetts Proper met at Bradford, Wednesday, June 27, 1810, 9 o'clock, A. M. Present the following Delegates:

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| Rev. Messrs. | From |
| Levi White and | } Berkshire Association. |
| Nathaniel Turner, | |
| Benjamin R. Woodbridge, | Mountain. |
| John Emerson, | Northern Hampshire. |

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|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Rufus Wells and | } | Central Hampshire. |
| Vinson Gould, | | |
| Thomas Snell, Brookfield. | | |
| Titus T. Barton and | } | Worcester South. |
| Joseph Goffe, | | |
| Humphrey C. Perley and | } | Haverhill. |
| Samuel Mead, | | |
| Ebenezer Dutch and | } | Essex Middle. |
| Thomas Holt, | | |
| Manasseh Cutler, L. L. D. and | } | Salem and Vicinity. |
| Samuel Worcester, | | |
| Salmon Cone and | } | Connecticut General. |
| Evan Johns, | | |
| Samuel Wood, New Hampshire General. | | |

Also Rev. Enoch Hale, Secretary of the Association, and Rev. Jonathan Allen, Minister of the Parish in which the meeting was convened.

The meeting was opened in the academy.

The Rev. Dr. Cutler was chosen Moderator; the Rev. Samuel Worcester, Scribe; and the Rev. Thomas Snell, Assistant Scribe.

The Throne of Grace was addressed in prayer by the Moderator.

The Rev. Samuel Spring, D. D. Delegate from the General Association of Massachusetts Proper to the General Association of Connecticut, the Rev. Professors of the Divinity College, the Rev. Dr. Pearson, late Professor, and the Rev. Messrs. Morrison and Dana of the Presbyterian Communion, were admitted to an honorary sitting.

The Rev. Messrs. Holt, Goffe, and Cone, were appointed a Committee of arrangements.

Voted that the Rev. Mr. Johns of Berlin, Connecticut, be requested to preach before the Association, provided the preacher previously appointed, be not seasonably present.

Voted that, after adjournment, the session of the Association should be public in the meeting house.

11 o'clock, A. M. Adjourned for public worship, to meet for business at the meeting house, at 2, P. M.

Attended public worship, the exercises of which were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Johns. Text, Heb. iii. 8.

2 o'clock, P. M. Met agreeably to adjournment.

The Committee of arrangements made their report, which was accepted.

The report of the Rev. Dr. Spring, delegate to the General Association of Connecticut, was heard also the report of the Rev. Mr. Allen, delegate to the General Association of New Hampshire.

From the Berkshire, the Mountain, the Central Hampshire the Southern Hampshire, the Brookfield, the Worcester South, the Haverhill, and the Essex Middle, Associations, attestations were given that those

several associations had very unanimously consented to the amendment of the Constitution of the General Association. submitted the last year to their consideration.

The Rev. Messrs. Cone, Woods and Snell, were appointed a Committee to take minutes of the narratives on the state of the churches and of religion, to be given by the delegates.

Voted unanimously to appoint two delegates from this Association, to attend the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to propose and establish a union with that body, similar to that which has already been formed with the General Associations of Connecticut and New Hampshire.

Voted to appoint delegates from this Association, to attend the next meeting of the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers of Vermont, to propose and establish a union with that body, similar to that specified in the preceding vote.

5 o'clock, P. M. Adjourned for public worship. Sermon by the Rev. Nathaniel Turner, of New Marlborough, appointed preacher by the Berkshire Association. 2 Tim. ii. 10.

Immediately after divine service resumed business.

The Rev. Joseph Lyman, D.D. of Hatfield, and the Rev. Manasseh Cutler, L. L. D. of Hamilton, were chosen delegates to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The Rev. Enoch Hale, of Westhampton, was chosen second to Dr. Lyman; and the

Rev. Samuel Worcester, of Salem, second to Dr. Cutler.

Adjourned to Thursday, 7 o'clock, A. M.

Thursday morning, met agreeably to adjournment.

The Rev. Jacob Catlin, of New Marlborough, and the Rev. Zephaniah S. Moore, of Leicester, were chosen delegates to the General Association of Connecticut. The Rev. Jonathan L. Pomeroy, of Worthington, was chosen second to Mr. Catlin; and the Rev. Ephraim Ward, of Brookfield, second to Mr. Moore.

The Rev. Samuel Spring, D.D. of Newburyport, and the Rev. Joseph Goffe, of Sutton, were chosen delegates to the General Association of New Hampshire.

The Rev. Theophilus Packard, of Shelburne, and the Rev. Samuel Austin, D.D. of Worcester, were chosen delegates to the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers of Vermont.

Narratives were heard of the state of the churches and of religion, from the delegates from the Berkshire, Mountain, and Northern Hampshire Associations.

11 o'clock. Adjourned for public worship at Haverhill.—The Rev. Mr. Morrison, of Londonderry, preached. Text, Isa. xlv. 25.

2 P. M. Met according to adjournment.

Narratives were given of the state of the churches and of religion, within the limits of the Central Hampshire, the Southern Hampshire, the Brookfield, and the Worcester South, Associations.

Four young gentlemen, members of the Divinity College,

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were introduced, and presented the following paper.

"The Undersigned, members of the Divinity College, respectfully request the attention of their Rev. Fathers, convened in the General Association at Bradford, to the following *statement* and inquiries.

"They beg leave to *state*, that their minds have been long impressed with the duty and importance of personally attempting a mission to the heathen; that the impressions on their minds have induced a serious, and they trust, a prayerful consideration of the subject in its various attitudes, particularly in relation to the probable success, and the difficulties, attending such an attempt; and that, after examining all the information which they can obtain, they consider themselves as devoted to this work for life, whenever God, in his providence, shall open the way.

"They now offer the following *inquiries*, on which they solicit the opinion and advice of this Association. Whether, with their present views and feelings, they ought to renounce the object of missions, as either visionary or impracticable; if not, whether they ought to direct their attention to the eastern, or the western world; whether they may expect patronage and support from a Missionary Society in this country, or must commit themselves to the direction of a European Society; and what preparatory measures they ought to take previous to actual engagement?

"The undersigned, feeling their youth and inexperience, look up to their fathers in the

church, and respectfully solicit their advice, direction, and prayers.

ADONIRAM JUDSON, JUN.
SAMUEL NOTT, JUN.
SAMUEL J. MILLS,
SAMUEL NEWELL."

After hearing from the young gentlemen some more particular account of the state of their minds, and their views, relative to the subject offered to consideration, the business was committed to the Rev. Messrs. Spring, Worcester, and Hale.

4 o'clock. Adjourned for public worship. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Wood, of Boscawen. Text, 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.

Immediately after public service, attended to narratives on the state of the churches, and of religion, from the delegates from Haverhill, Essex Middle, and Salem and Vicinity, Associations; also from the General Associations of Connecticut and New Hampshire.—Adjourned.

Friday, 7 o'clock, A. M. Met according to adjournment.

A communication was made from Berkshire Association, giving information that the licences given by that Association to candidates for the ministry, are limited to the term of four years.

The Committee, on the subject of Foreign Missions, made the following report, which was unanimously accepted.

"The Committee, to whom was referred the request of the young gentlemen, members of the Divinity College, for advice relative to missions to the heathen, beg leave to submit the following report.

The object of missions to the heathen, cannot but be regarded,

by the friends of the Redeemer, as vastly interesting and important. It deserves the most serious attention of all who wish well to the best interests of mankind, and especially of those, who devote themselves to the service of God in the kingdom of his Son, under the impression of the special direction, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The state of their minds, modestly expressed by the theological Students, who have presented themselves before this body, and the testimonies received respecting them, are such as deeply to impress the conviction, that they ought not "to renounce the object of missions," but sacredly to cherish "their present views," in relation to that object : and it is submitted whether the peculiar and abiding impressions, by which they are influenced, ought not to be gratefully recognized, as a Divine intimation of something good and great in relation to the propagation of the Gospel, and calling for correspondent attention and exertions.

Therefore,

Voted, That there be instituted by this General Association, a Board of Commissioners for foreign Missions, for the purpose of devising ways and means, and adopting and prosecuting measures, for promoting the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands.

Voted, That the said Board of Commissioners consist of nine members, all of them, in the first instance, chosen by this Association ; and afterwards annually, five of them by this Body, and four of them by the General

Association of Connecticut.— Provided, however, that, if the General Association of Connecticut do not choose to unite in this object, the annual election of all the Commissioners shall be by this General Association.

It is understood that the Board of Commissioners, here contemplated, will adopt their own form of organization, and their own rules and regulations.

Voted, That, fervently commending them to the grace of God, we advise the young gentlemen, whose request is before us, in the way of earnest prayer and diligent attention to suitable studies and means of information, and putting themselves under the patronage and direction of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, humbly to wait the openings and guidance of Providence in respect to their great and excellent design."

Pursuant to the report of the Committee, the Association proceeded to institute a Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and the following gentlemen were chosen ; His Excellency John Treadwell, Esq. Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight, Gen. Jedediah Huntington, and Rev. Calvin Chapin, of Connecticut ; Rev. Dr. Joseph Lyman, Rev. Dr. Samuel Spring, William Bartlett, Esq. Rev. Samuel Worcester, and Dea. Samuel H. Walley, of Massachusetts.

Voted, That the gentlemen of the Commission, belonging to Newburyport, Salem, and Boston, consult with the other members, for the purpose of appointing a time and place for the first meeting of the Board.

The Committee for taking

minutes of the narratives of the state of religion, made their report.

Voted, That the report of the Committee respecting the state of religion, be committed to the disposal of a Committee for publication.

The Rev. Messrs. Woods, Allen, and Worcester, were chosen a Committee for publication.

Voted, That the next meeting of this Association be held at the Rev. Mr. Worcester's in Salem, on the last Wednesday of June next, at 9 o'clock, A.M.

Voted, That the Southern Hampshire Association be requested to appoint the preacher for the next meeting.

Voted, That the thanks of this Association be given to the Moderator and Scribe.

After joining in a psalm of praise, and in a prayer by the Secretary, the meeting was dissolved.

M. CUTLER, *Moderator.*

Attest,

SAM'L WORCESTER, *Scribe.*

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REPORT

On the state of the Churches and of Religion.

THE Committee appointed to take minutes from the narratives given of the state of religion, by the several delegates to the General Association, beg leave to make the following Report.

Having attended to the narratives of the state of religion within our limits, we have reason to praise God for his kind remembrance of his Church, in building her walls in these troublous times; and in making her to rejoice in the salvation of her King. The state of religion we

contemplate with mingled emotions of sorrow and joy. While in the western portion of the state there are several towns without a church, and without a regular ministry; and while in other places within our limits, Christian institutions are much neglected, religion declines, and an alarming stupor has seized the minds of persons of every description; we behold with pleasure many glorious displays of Divine mercy in different sections of the Commonwealth.

In most of our societies there appear an increasing seriousness, and a more general and solemn attendance upon the institutions of the Gospel; and many churches have been richly blessed with a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. God hath clothed his ministers with righteousness, and rejoiced the hearts of his people.

Passing over some promising appearances in a few places in the county of Hampshire, we dwell with delight on many towns in the county of Worcester, blessed peculiarly with the effusions of the Holy Spirit. No period, within sixty years past, has been so much distinguished for religious revivals, in this part of Christ's vineyard, or opened such a moving and animating scene before the friends of God. In the towns of Princeton, Holden, Paxton, Leicester, Sutton, Ward, and Oxford, many have seen the deadly leprosy of their hearts, and been excited to repair to the great Physician of souls for help. Sinners have been converted from the error of their ways to the wisdom of the just. Not less, it is compa-

ted, than about six hundred, have been added to the churches in these several towns; many more have become hopefully the subjects of Divine grace; and the work of the Lord is still progressive. In many other towns also, men are trembling for their souls, and some promising instances of conversion have occurred.

Travelling to our eastern limits in the county of Essex, we joyfully trace the footsteps of Emmanuel. In Salem, Beverly, Manchester, Marblehead, and Danvers. God has wonderfully displayed the riches of his grace, while the Gospel has been preached amidst the effusions of his Holy Spirit. This work has been conducted with such solemnity, stillness, and order, and been followed with such happy effects, as to constrain even the enemies of the cross to say, "Surely this is the finger of God." Within a few months there have been between four and five hundred added to these churches; and many more are now inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

The whole number which has been added to the churches within the compass of the Association, the year past, from the best statements that we have been able to collect, is about twelve hundred, a number exceeding very considerably the accounts we have received in any former year. Thus there still is flowing a river, the streams whereof cannot fail to make glad the city of our God.

We may further add, as an encouragement to the people of God, that the face of infidelity has in some measure lost its

boldness, and the progress of error has received an evident check. The friends of the Redeemer have assumed a firmer countenance; and there is an increasing engagedness among both ministers and people in the cause of truth and righteousness. It appears also, that the Lord has not left even his destitute churches; but is filling up their vacancies with evangelical preachers; and that the churches, in general, are blessed with a good degree of union and harmony.

It is pleasing to observe that the Spirit of the Lord is not straitened. His gracious influences are not confined to our limits, but extended with glorious effects to many societies in Connecticut, and other parts of our country; where by the invincible power of God the obdurate hearts of sinners have been melted into the love of the Gospel.

We would also notice with pleasure and gratitude the smiles of God upon the Theological Seminary in this vicinity, designed to prepare pious young men to preach the Gospel of Christ.—Of that infant Institution above sixty have been admitted as members, five of whom have commenced preaching as regular licenciates. And we are constrained to consider the ardent desire of some of those pious students to leave their country and kindred to preach a crucified Saviour to perishing heathen, as an omen for good to Zion, both at home and abroad.

God's ear is not heavy that it cannot hear. The displays of Divine grace which have now been detailed, were generally preceded by the special and uni-

ted prayers of Christ's ministers and people. The great Head of the church has never said to Jacob, or his seed, "Seek ye me in vain."

That spirit of prayer, which God has given to many of our churches, we joyfully recognize as the harbinger of Christ, in his power and grace, to bring sinners to repentance.

The prosperity of Zion is a most desirable and important object, for which ministers should labor, and Christians pray. Encouragement to prayer cannot be wanting. Let the friends of Jesus then pray for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem.— This is the cause of God, to whose interests we owe our time, our talents, our whole selves. It is the cause of Christ, for which he bled and died. It is a cause which must and will prevail. Zion is destined to live, to rise, and triumph. Let no man account any thing dear to himself, that he may be found faithful to her interests, and enjoy the favor of her King who reigns for ever.

Bradford, June 28, 1810.

FOREIGN.

Account of the Oriental Manuscripts presented by the Rev. Dr. C. Buchanan to the University of Cambridge.

A LEARNED Gentleman (Mr. T. Yeates) in the university of Cambridge, has for several months past been employed in arranging and collating these valuable manuscripts. They are chiefly *Bib-*

lical, and are written in the Hebrew, Syriac, and Ethiopic languages. They were all collected by Dr. Buchanan in India. The Hebrew manuscripts were obtained from the Black Jews, who have had settlements in India from time immemorial, and are now found in numbers about Cochin. These Jews differ in many respects from those of other countries, and bear evident marks of being descendants from those ancient dispersions we read of in the sacred history. They call themselves *Bene Israel*. They have the Hebrew Pentateuch, but scarcely know of any other books of Scripture. A copy of the Hebrew Pentateuch, written on goat-skins, and found in one of their synagogues, is in the *Buchanan Collection*. The Syriac manuscripts were collected from the Syrian Christians in Travancore and Malayala, where a race of Christians has existed ever since the Apostolic times; and the native Indian Christians bear the name of the "Christians of St. Thomas," to this day. They have the whole Bible and other books not in our canon, extant in the Syriac language; and theirs is perhaps the purest of all the versions of Scripture now known. There is in this collection, a copy of the Bible, containing the books of the Old and New Testament, with the Apocrypha, written on large folio vellum, and in the ancient or Estrangelo character, and which was a present to Dr. Buchanan from Mar Dionysius, the Archbishop of the Indian church. Though all these MSS. were brought from India, they were not all written in

India; some were written at Antioch, Mesopotamia, and other parts of Syria, Asia, and Africa.—The Gentleman who is collating these manuscripts communicated the above account to the Editor of the Christian Observer, and adds,

“I now proceed to a particular description of a no less *important* than *curious* article in the collection, namely, the Indian roll of the Pentateuch; which I hope will be found interesting to some of your readers.

This MS. on a roll of goatskins *dyed red*, was found in the record chest of a synagogue of the Black Jews, in the interior of Malayala, in India, by the Rev. Claud. Buchanan, in the year 1806. It measures in length forty-eight feet, and in breadth about twenty-two inches, or a Jewish cubit. The book of Leviticus, and most part of Deuteronomy, are wanting. The original length of the roll was not less than ninety feet English, as appears from calculation; and is properly a morocco roll, though now much faded. In its present condition, it consists of thirty-seven skins, contains one hundred and seventeen columns of writing, perfectly clear and legible; and exhibits a noble example of the manner and form of the most ancient Hebrew manuscripts among the Jews. The columns are a palm broad, and contain from forty-five to fifty lines each.

Some of the skins appear more ancient than others: and it is evident from a bare inspection, they were not all written at the same period, nor by the

same hand. To describe it more particularly. 1. The best Spanish MSS. are the nearest imitation of the Hebrew characters, as to their form. 2. The protracted letters, as the long *aleph*, *he*, *lamed*, &c. chiefly occur at the ending of the lines of this roll; among which may be reckoned the long *beth* and *resh*, not usual in the printed text. 3. The letter *cheth* or *heth*, hath its upper limb in a semicircular form, and is so written in a MS. roll of Esther in this collection. 4. It has no title nor subscript; nor does it appear to have had any subscript at all, if we may judge from the concluding part of Genesis. 5. The *parashahs*, or sections of the law, distinguished by tripple *fees* or *samechs*, in the Jewish copies of the Pentateuch, are not otherwise marked but by spaces in this copy. In like manner the lesser sections, or paragraphs, are no where marked than by spaces. 6. The two great points at the end of verses in other copies, are wanting in this. 7. The Hebrew *hyphen*, called *maccafeh*, no where occurs. 8. None of the Hebrew vowel-points, accents, or pauses, are extant in it. 9. It has none of the Masoretical notes, or various readings, called the *keri* and *eethib*. 11. The poetical parts, as Exod. xv. preserve a metrical form, as in other copies—Therefore this is in all respects an unpointed copy. Its collation remains a desirable object; chiefly because that, in comparing several whole and parts of chapters with the printed text, only one variation has been observed. This circum-

stance, we remark, affords considerable testimony to its integrity and value : and the correctness of our best printed editions of the Pentateuch appears confirmed by it. The following verses have been selected as a specimen of its conformity to the printed text—viz. Gen. i. 1, 24, 26 ; ii. 1, 2, 3, 4 ; iii. 15 ; iv. 1, 8, 18, 26 ; v. 1 ; xi. 6 ; xxii. 13 ; xxiii. 2 ; xxvii. 46 ; xxx. 42 ; xlix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. (a variation), 25, 26, 27, 28 ; Exod. xii. 40, 41 ; xx. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

The *literæ majusculæ* and *literæ minusculæ*, noted in the Masoretic copies, are preserved in the text, but are not noted in the margin : particularly the small *he*, in Gen. ii. 4 ; the small *capht*, in xxiii. 2 ; the small *koph*, xxvii. 46 ; the large and final *pe*, xxv. 42 : as likewise the *inverted nun*, Num. x. 35, 36. The *samech* is written large in the word *sepher*, where it begins the line, 1 Gen. v. 1.

The practice of writing the books of the Law in *skin rolls* is doubtless very ancient ; for the preparation of parchment and vellum for this purpose, being no more than an improvement, denotes a progress of the art, and consequently is of later invention. Morinus, in a letter to Dr. Thomas Comber, Dean of Carlisle, and formerly Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, writes, that he had in his possession a MS. roll of the Samaritan Pentateuch, written on calf-skins, of an uncertain date : his words are these : “Sunt mihi quatuor exemplaria codicis

Hebræo-Samaritani. Primum integerrimum in vitulina pelle majoribus et elegantissimis characteribus descriptum. In fine Exodiscriptum est, *Quadrigen-tis argenteis Damasci emptum esse anno Arabum, 782.*” This letter is dated from Paris, An. 1633, Vide Antiquit. Ecclesiæ Orientalis. Epist. xxxviii. 8vo. Lond. 1682. The year of the Arabs, 782, corresponds to the year of our Lord 1404, the year of its purchase ; but the date of the MS. was not known.

The learned Montfaucon makes mention of a MS. roll of the Hebrew Pentateuch in calf-skins, preserved in the library of the monastery of the Dominicans at Bologna in Italy. “The letters,” says he, “have scarcely lost any thing of their blackness ; which is attributed to the skin, a mighty preserver of the ink.” This MS. was presented to the monastery by the Jews when Aymericus was general of the order ; that is, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, four hundred years since.” Vide Travels in Italy, pag. 435. Now if this MS. which was considered very ancient in the time of Aymericus, be supposed to have been written 500 years before, the age of it at this present time will be 1000 years, supposing it now existing. Aymericus was general of the above order of Dominicans, An. 1308.

The same learned writer mentions a very ancient copy of the book of Esther, written on dressed calf-skins, preserved in the monastery of the canons regular of St Saviour's in Bologna ; said to have been written by Es-

dras himself. See Montf. Travels in Italy, pag. 442.

There is a treatise inserted in the body of the Jerusalem Talmud, containing the rules of the scribes, and how, and in what manner, the sacred books are to be written. The same directs, *that the law be written on the skins of clean beasts*; of which number are sheep, goats, and calves. The Jews had the art of dressing and dying skins so early as the time of Moses: and ram-skins dyed red made one of the coverings of the tabernacle (Exod. xxvi. 14:) and for aught we know, Moses wrote the Law on skins so prepared. The very existence of these rolls seems to favor such a conjecture as extremely probable: and we may consider them *imitations*, and exact *models*, of the most ancient manner of writing the sacred books among the Jews. The Indian morocco roll in the Buchanan Collection, is certainly an important acquisition.—I am, &c.

T. YEATES.

Cambridge, Feb. 7, 1810.

Extracts from the Second Report of the Philadelphia Bible Society, May, 1810.

(Concluded from p. 315.)

WITH respect to the funds of the Society, the Managers would remark, that they have received very considerable augmentation from distant benefactors. In addition to the sum of 222 dollars from the island of St. Croix, already mentioned, the Society of Schwenckfeld-

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ters in the counties of Berks and Montgomery, in this state, have, on two different occasions, transmitted donations to our funds, amounting in the whole to 130 dollars. The Rev. Dr. Keith of South-Carolina has transmitted donations and life subscriptions to the amount of 270 dollars. The Rev. Alexander Balmain, of the parish of Frederick in Virginia, has transmitted 20 dollars. The Rev. Joseph Patterson, of Washington county, in this state, has forwarded a donation of 32 dollars 50 Cents. The ingenious mode in which this was collected deserves to be mentioned, as it may perhaps be thought worthy of imitation by others. A box was fixed up in the church with this inscription, O GIVE ME A BIBLE; and after three months it was opened, and found to contain the above sum, the joint contributions of every description of persons, even of little children. Ten dollars have been received from J. L. Murray, S. Carolina. Ten dollars from an anonymous benefactor at Steubenville, on the Ohio river; and five guineas from a lady in England. But for full information concerning the state of the funds, reference must be made to the Treasurer's account, which will be found in the Appendix. The Managers have for some time been seriously impressed with the necessity of making some further appeal to the liberality of the public in favor of the funds. Much might be done by the co-operation of religious denominations, and by congregational contributions, as well as by the efforts of individual

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benevolence. But when their views on this important subject are matured, they will probably be submitted to the public in a separate address.

The Society were informed at their last meeting, that application had been made to the Legislature of this State, for an act incorporating this Society, which, owing to the late period of the Session at which the petition was presented, was laid over among the unfinished business. The Managers now state with satisfaction that the Legislature, at its late session, took up the subject, and have granted a charter to the Society, by which its existence is recognized in law, and security afforded to the public that such donations and bequests as the charitably disposed shall devote to the dispersion of the Scriptures among the poor, will be applied to their proper object.

The great advantage which would accrue from the possession of a set of stereotype plates for the Bible, has long engaged the attention of the Managers. Two pages of stereotype, together with specimens of their printing, were sent for their inspection, from the Society in London; and through the same channel they have ascertained that the expense of a set of stereotype plates for the Bible, on such a type as would suit the views of the Society, will be from 657 to 705 pounds sterling. When they considered that the possession of a set of such plates would enable them to multiply copies of the Bible at the lowest expense, and thus render their funds more extensively useful; and

still more when they reflected that it would put it in their power to give greater effect to the operations of other Bible Societies, which are springing up daily in every part of the country, the Managers did not hesitate to order the plates to be procured and forwarded from London as soon as possible. The expense is indeed great, when compared with the fund at their disposal; but they were willing to believe, that the obvious and high importance of the measure could not fail to draw from the public liberality a sum sufficient to counterbalance the heavy draught.

A few years since the most distinct feature of the Christian world, was a zeal for missions, which has not yet abated; at present a zeal for translating, printing, and diffusing the Holy Scriptures grows prominent. These two happily harmonize; and it is to be hoped, that by the blessing of God upon both, they will spread the knowledge of the Redeemer and his salvation over the earth, and introduce that happy state of things, when knowledge, righteousness, and peace, shall pervade the world, and meliorate eminently the condition and the prospects of the human family.

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MR. EDITOR,

THE following memoirs of the Life of Deacon Josiah Caswell, are sent to you for publication, if you judge it will be for the edification of the Lord's people.

DEACON JOSIAH CASWELL was the son of Mr. Jedi-

diah and Mrs. Mary Caswell, of Norton in Massachusetts. He was born July 25, 1727, O. S. When about 15 years old, his mind began to be tender and seriously impressed with eternal realities. But he did not find rest in Christ for more than twenty years, being the most of this time under serious impressions ; and the latter part of it under deep conviction.— Soon after he had obtained a hope, he made a public profession of the Lord Jesus, in his church at New Preston in Connecticut, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Day, having removed from Norton (in Mass.) to this place. Not long after he joined, the church chose him to the office of a deacon, in which he served to acceptance about nineteen years, until he removed to the adjacent town of Kent. In this place he continued in communion with the church, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Bordwell till his death, which was in March 7, 1807, and in the 80th year of his age.

Deacon Caswell held in sentiment to the creature humbling, God exalting doctrines of the gospel ; and his religion appeared in practice, to be that of the new heart. He was called to the sore trial of burying both of his parents in the early part of life. He also lived to bury his only brother and three sisters.

He was blessed with three sons, and two daughters, by the wife of his youth,* all of whom, except one, he was called in Providence to bury in the vigor

* Her name before marriage was Abigail Kinney.

of their lives.† He could say with the Psalmist, "Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles," which he was enabled to bear with gospel faith, and confidence in the Lord. It would be pleasant and edifying to review the history of the life of this deceased servant of Jesus, from the day of his hope ; but for the want of time, we shall now consider him in his last sickness and death.

The disease of which he died, being a mortification in one of his limbs, it was very terrible and distressing, especially the three last months of his life. Yet he was enabled to endure without murmuring, and to triumph over the king of terrors. He was a pattern of patience and resignation to the will of God. When he first perceived the fatal disease to be encreasing, he expressed himself thus :— "The mortification is gaining ground upon me ; well it will gain just as fast as infinite wisdom sees best, it will be none too fast." Being asked in a severe turn of pain, whether he was glad that the Lord reigned ? he answered, "Glad, O yes, I would not have it otherwise for the universe ; I would by no means take his place of governing, if I could ; I never wish to have *my* own will, if opposed to his."

Although he was subject to gloom, and not without his dark hours, respecting himself, yet he was never moved from the testimony of the gospel, con-

† The surviving child is Julius Caswell, of Kent, who sustains the office of a deacon in the church, and of a justice of the peace in the civil department.

cerning Jesus, and still confided in the divine government. "I do not know," said he in one of his dark hours, "how it will fare with me, I think it is a matter of uncertainty. I have been thinking to day, whether I have not been waiting and longing for that (meaning death) which will introduce and lead me down to eternal perdition. But this one thing I am established in, God will be righteous and just if he sends me there. I feel firm in the belief that God will do all things well. What God undertakes to do, will assuredly be done, and that is not all, it will be well done. It is of small consequence what becomes of me, if God may only be glorified, and his will done."

On a departing friend's wishing him a comfortable night, he replied, "I hope it will be so, and if consistent with God's holy will, I shall be comfortable ; I pray, and desire above every thing to be wholly and completely resigned to the will of God." This holy and unreserved submission of the gospel, shone conspicuous in him to the close of life ; not only in his comfortable, but in his most distressing hours. He would sometimes say, "it is a glorious thing that the Lord reigns ; he does reign, and will reign for ever and ever. Oh, I would not have it otherwise for ten thousand such worlds as this."

As deacon Caswell lay in his last sickness, from the latter part of December to the first part of the following March, and every day through the whole scene was taken up, in a greater or less degree, in the all important things of the eternal world,

both he and his friends expecting every day would be the last for a long time, there is room in this paper but for a small part of what took place ; and it is difficult to say, whether the many things of his diary, in the above period, which are necessarily omitted, or the few recorded, are the most spiritual, instructive, and edifying. He highly esteemed, and took great delight in the Lord's day, and in his worship and ordinances. He was much in thanksgiving and praise ; and he prayed without fainting or ceasing. He was sometimes favored with special nearness to God, and enabled to pour out his soul in devotion. He prayed fervently, not only for himself, but for the nation and the world ; for relatives, acquaintance, and for strangers ; for the afflicted, and especially for the household of faith : that God would appear in his glory, and build up Zion, not only in the place where he lived, but through the world.

He felt much for awakened souls ; and manifested a distressing anxiety, not only for careless sinners, but for fruitless professors. These he faithfully and tenderly warned, and earnestly exhorted to the important work of self-examination. One night, after conversing with the watchers, (the united heads of a family) on the duty and privilege of family prayer, and remarking on the awful situation of those parents who have never suffered their children to hear them address the throne of grace for themselves, nor their families, he added, "I do not know how it is, but I am afraid, my dear friends, that this is the case with

you ; if so, let me entreat you to think seriously of the matter."

Let every reader, especially if the head of a family, apply this to himself. Though deacon Caswell was of them, who give much greater evidence to others respecting their being in Christ, than they appear to have for themselves ; yet though subject to fears, he undoubtedly had for the most part a comfortable hope himself. Sometimes his views of the divine perfections were unusually refreshing. In one of these favored seasons he expressed himself nearly in these words : " O what a glorious being God is ! how holy, how just, how good, how merciful, patient, condescending, and full of love ! Bless the Lord, O my soul !" He was also sometimes blessed with ravishing views, of the complete atonement, perfect righteousness, and infinite fulness of the Lord Jesus. " I feel," said he, " that I can take hold of the promises. I now enjoy what I have so much longed for. O blessed Redeemer, thou whom my soul hath so much longed and waited for, come quickly ! O come this moment, if it may please thee, and take the whole possession of me ; take my soul to thyself, I long to go home, I shall arrive safe, I shall see as I am seen, and know as I am known ; O take me this moment ; yet let thy will, not mine be done.—May I be willing to wait just as long as my dear Jesus pleases. O how holy, how just, how good, blessed and glorious art thou, O my God ! O what sweet peace and tranquillity of mind I now enjoy. Thou wilt keep in

perfect peace, him whose mind is stayed on thee. This blessed peace I now feel. Bless the Lord, O my soul."

He continued in this happy frame of mind, and in those rapturous strains, until his strength failed. But in a little time he recovered his strength, and proceeded thus : " Never, never, did I enjoy such a time as this. Never since this poor soul and body were united, did I enjoy such consolation, such ravishing views and prospects, as I have done this day. O what glory, and brightness have I discovered in the character of God, and the heavenly world ! What an infinite fulness in the merits of the Redeemer ! There is a fulness, and sufficiency enough in his redemption for ten thousand times ten thousand such worlds as this. O dear Redeemer, take my soul to thy blessed arms, and make it pure in thy precious blood !" On the family's singing an anthem, entitled, Divine Love, he with ardent desire added at the close, " O may these voices, which now have been singing so pleasantly, all meet in heaven, and in a purer manner, unite in singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb !" He went on for some time in a most cordial manner, to counsel and advise those around him, to live in an actual preparation to follow him into the invisible world. His soul could now gloriously triumph by faith, over his present trials, over the grave, and the king of terrors. " Oh," said he, " can this pain, can these feelings be death ? I wish, I long to go." The Wednesday before he died, he made a parting prayer with friends, go-

ing to a distance, which was very impressive and affecting to all present.

The day before he died, raising his hands and his eyes to heaven he said, "Soon I shall be there, where I shall join in doxologies of praise to my dear Redeemer for ever and ever."

On Saturday March 7, 1807, after a very painful and wearisome night, spent in prayer to God, about 8 o'clock, he closed his eyes, without a groan, or a sigh, on all things beneath the sun. The last connected sentence he ever uttered, and just before his death, was this, "O my God, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee!"

In this deceased servant of the Lord, we see the fulfilment of that precious promise, "They shall still bear fruit in old age, they shall be fat, and flourishing to shew that the Lord is upright."

When a youth is hopefully converted, it is to the honor of the Lord Jesus, and his religion. But when we behold one brought in in youth, laden with fruit at seventy or eighty, not only reaping spiritual benefits, from all past trials, and not only enduring the burdens of age, and bodily diseases without fainting, but strong in the grace and strength of the Lord, and triumphing by faith over the king of terrors, these things, in a peculiar manner, manifest the glory of the Lord Jesus, and the truth of his gospel. Nothing appears so glorious, so true and desirable as the religion of Jesus, and the

sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit.—

And we now have before us, an old man, who had buried all his father's family, and almost all his own; one who had been tossed on the tempestuous ocean of life, and in addition to all the infirmities of eighty years, racked from day to day, with most excruciating pain, from a mortified limb, turning to corruption; yet through all supported by gospel faith, ever refusing to call any of these things troublesome, because they came from his heavenly Father, but patient and exceeding joyful, and exclaiming like a glorious conqueror, "O death, where is thy sting, and O grave, where is thy victory!"*

What is there in the carnal pleasures, the vain riches, and airy honors of this world, which can afford such solid support in time of need! Will infidelity, and the ways and things of this ungodly world, thus cause the inward man to flourish, while the outward man perisheth? Will they soothe our pains, disarm death, and render a view of the grave pleasant? We know they will not. Surely then, the religion of the gospel which only affords these comforts, is from heaven, and it is all the wisdom, the duty, and the life of man.

May all who read these memoirs, so mark the honorable

* This servant of the Lord used to say his disorder was painful, but not troublesome, because it came from his heavenly Father. And how can I be easier and in a happier situation, than to have the consolations of God's holy Spirit!

and peaceful end of this servant of the Lord, as to follow him in his Christian life, that so their end may be also that of peace, and not the anguish, and despair of the ungodly. And when we consider the long spiritual night of more than twenty years, which this favored saint experienced, before he found comfort, and his many trials afterwards, let not the laboring and heavy laden despair, for though the night may be tedious and long, yet the joyful morning will come, and when it comes, the comfortable soul will not say the night was too tedious, or too long.

Death of Mrs. Daniel.

THE Georgia Analytical Repository, No. 3, contains the following singular account of the death of Mrs. Daniel. On the morning preceding her death, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel junior left her in perfect health, expecting their return at dinner time; shortly after this hour they arrived, and found the victuals on the table scarcely cold. To their unutterable surprise, their mother appeared in her grave clothes, having also prepared and taken possession of a suitable place for her corpse: to the earnest and affectionate enquiries which were immediately addressed to her, she calmly replied, "I am admonished by a strong impression on my mind that my departure is at hand; I hope grace has prepared me for my change: I have no desire to remain any longer in this world.

Pray be composed, and resign me to the will of my God: I am going to the rest that I have long desired."

With the best means in their power to reanimate her feeble body, they used all the remonstrances and entreaties that prudence and affection could suggest to banish from her mind the idea of instant dissolution: observations were made on her case, the natural appearance of her countenance; and hopes very confidently expressed, that she must be mistaken in her views of so sudden a death: in reply she said "I should be very sorry to find this to be the case, but am under no apprehension of it. I have received an assurance of being in heaven in a short time; my soul is in perfect peace; I feel no pain, and am happy: compose yourselves, and leave me to my joys: Love and serve God, and you will soon follow me to his presence! May God bless you, my dear children, and keep you in the way of his holy commandments."

With great composure she directed a pair of hose and a handkerchief, which she had laid by themselves for the purpose, to be put on her corpse, as the only articles she had omitted in otherwise fitting herself for the coffin. Nothing like distortion was seen in her features; no symptoms of alarm, nor the slightest degree of derangement, appeared in her conduct or conversation. Life gradually retreated from the extremities of the system; her breath began to fail, and in the course of a very few minutes she gently departed.

She had been remarkably healthy for many years, and never appear-

ed more so than she was a little before her dissolution. It is supposed, that, within two hours from the time she conceived herself warned to prepare immediately for death, she was in eternity ; several of her neighbors, who are worthy of the

highest confidence, speak of her as a pious and excellent character. The extraordinary manner of her dissolution is said to have had a happy effect, in connexion with her dying counsel, on her surviving relatives.

POETRY.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

A Hermit's Meditation.

IN lonesome cave,
Of noise and interruption void,
His thoughtful solitude
A Hermit thus enjoy'd :

His choicest book
The remnant of a human head
The volume was—whence he
This solemn lecture read.

Whoe'er thou wert,
Partner of my retirement now,
My nearest intimate,
My best companion thou !

On thee to muse
The busy living world I left :
Of converse all but thine,
And silent that,—bereft !

Wert thou the rich,
The idol of a gazing crowd ?
Wert thou the great, [how'd ?
To whom obsequious thousands

Was learning's store
E'er treasur'd up within this shell ?
Did wisdom e'er within
This empty hollow dwell ?

Did youthful charms
E'er redden on this ghastful face ?
Did beauty's bloom these cheeks,
This forehead ever grace ?

If on this brow
E'er sat the scornful, haughty frown,
Deceitful pride ! where now
Is that disdain ?—'tis gone !

If cheerful mirth
A gayness o'er this baldness, cast,
Delusive fleeting joy !
Where is it now ?—'tis past !

To deck this scalp
If tedious long-liv'd hours it cost,
Vain fruitless toil ! where's now
That labor seen ?—'tis past !

But painful sweat,
The dear earn'd price of daily bread,
Was all, perhaps, that thee
With hungry sorrows fed !

Perhaps but tears,
Surest relief of heart-sick woe,
Thine only drink, from down
These sockets us'd to flow !

Oppress'd perhaps
With mis'ry, and with aged cares,
Down to the grave thou bro't'st
A few and hoary hairs !

'Tis well, perhaps !
No marks, no token can I trace
What on this stage of life
Thy rank or station was !

Nameless, unknown !
Of all distinction stript and bare,
In nakedness conceal'd,
Oh ! who shall thee declare ?

Nameless, unknown !
Yet fit companion thou for me,
Who hear, no human voice,
Nor human visage see !

From me, from thee,
The glories of the world are gone !
Nor yet have either lost
What we could call our own !

What we are now, [brave
The great, the wise, the fair, the
Shall all hereafter be,—
All Hermits in the grave.